

SERMON ON "SIN"

Preached Yesterday by Rev. D. W. Howard, of St. Matthew's.

ONE OF THE LENTEN SERIES

Being Preached by Mr. Howard. Struggle the Normal Condition of the Christian Life, and Failure is Sin—In Those Who Mount Highest in Spirituality the Sense of Guilt Becomes Most Acute.

Sunday morning, at St. Matthew's P. E. church, the pastor, Rev. D. W. Howard, preached the fifth of his series of Lenten sermons under the general head, "The Struggle of Life," the topic of this sermon being "The Failure of the Struggle, Sin." Next Sunday the last of the series, "The End of the Struggle, Death," will be preached.

Mr. Howard, in his discourse, said: Struggle is the normal condition of the Christian life in this world, and the failure of that struggle is sin. The very word itself, both in the Hebrew and Greek, has this as its primary meaning; both have, as their underlying idea, "a missing of a mark," and so present to us sin, as the failure of the end of life, a deflection from our aim, the exact opposite to St. Paul's great purpose, "this one thing I do—I press toward the mark for the prize." Sin is the giving up the struggle, missing the mark of our high calling, losing the prize.

In our Lord's life we see no deviation, no moral failure, no surrender of principle, no striking from the struggle. No, it only grows more intense and culminates in the supreme struggle of the passion. To-day is Passion Sunday, and from the altar rings out the challenge, as the gospel is read, "which of you convinceth me of sin?"

Christ had said previously, "because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not." If I had spoken falsely, such is the argument, you would have recognized that which is kindred to yourselves, but, "because I tell you the truth," the final opposition between Christ and the devil lies in the opposition of truth to falsehood. And this opposition repeats itself in the children of the two spiritual heads. There must be that which is akin to truth in us, if we are to believe truth.

The contrast between I and ye is made here as sharp as possible.

"But as for Me," says Christ, "because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not." Falsehood in action is sin. Falsehood within must show itself.

From words then the appeal is made to acts.

Sin is not mere "error," as Erasmus and some others have urged, because the word throughout the New Testament always means "contrariety to the will of God." While we cannot say that by itself this passage is sufficient to demonstrate the sinfulness of Christ, it reveals a sublime depth in His transcendent consciousness that places him—unless he were the most deluded or self-sufficient of human teachers—on a different position from all other divine messengers.

Conscious of Defects.

In proportion as all other great moral prophets have set their own standard high, they have become conscious of their own defects; and from Moses to St. Paul, from Augustine to St. Francis, the saintliest men have been the most alive to their own departures from their ideals of right. The standard of Jesus is higher than that of any other, and He appears nevertheless absolutely without need of repentance; above the power of temptation; beyond the range of conviction. True, the Jews brought a charge of madness and folly upon Him immediately; but so far from convicting Him or mankind, they stand forever covered with the shame of their own incompetence to comprehend His message or Himself. He being, then, without sin, and assuming that he stands in the eternal truth, and is the absolute truth of things, and that He cannot from His moral purity deceive or misinform them, and that His testimony to Himself is final, sufficient, and trustworthy, He asks, "If I say the truth" without your having convicted Me of sin, or brought any moral obliquity or offense against Me, "why do ye not believe Me?"

The reason is in them rather than in Him. The moral perfection of Jesus as the God-man is absolutely necessary to his character as "God's lamb," as "the only begotten," "the Son," and as "the judge" of the human race. To account for this sinless, perfect humanity, the entire conception of the divine nature blended in indissoluble union with His own is found imperative with every epoch of Christ's life.

At every development of His official character, in every new combination of circumstances, in conflict and sorrow, when smarting from treachery, and dying alone upon the cross, He is "perfect." He fulfills the perfect form. He reaches the standard of divine humanity.

In considering the subject of moral evil, we encounter a fact of such widespread and deep significance that it much impress itself upon any real religion. Sin is a disturbing element, a disorganizing force which breaks up the original relationship of love and confidence between God and man. Christianity recognizes this universal and fundamental fact, and will not endeavor to gloss it over, or to explain it away, or to assume that man's religious wants can be really satisfied without looking it boldly in the face, and providing against it a cure and an antidote.

In his original blessedness, man did God's will, not by compulsion, not through fear, but by his own free choice. His own instinct accorded with God's will; it always seemed to him the wisest, best, happiest way. But with sin there came a change. Man's liberty remains now as before, but his instinct is weakened or perverted; his own will is often opposed to God's will; and so there comes a struggle, or at least unrest, distress, and mutual repulsion.

That first instinctive hiding of Adam from the face of God is everlastingly repeated by every sin-conscious soul. Shame, fear, hate, drive the man fur-

ther and further away into the darkness, where he thinks and hopes God is not; and if unwillingly he catches sight of the face of God, he cries out, with all unclean spirits, "let us alone."

Where did man first learn those words? It is the cry of every evil soul in all time. They fear and flee from the face of God, they have ever done so since the fall. And when the God-man came and walked this earth, they knew Him, and meeting Him face to face, they cried out with agony, "What have we to do with thee?"

And so to-day this is the cry of moral depravity throughout the whole world. See what sin has accomplished in this world; the wretchedness, the vice, the crimes which reaches back as far as the history of the world gives record. The pages of the sacred narrative are blurred, and at times well-nigh blotted out with the account of wrong doing which has converted the harmony of human nature into distress and chaos.

See what sin is, if by nothing else, yet by its penalty. See the value of thy soul by the price paid for its redemption. See the love of God for thee, by what He suffered for thee.

The word of God hangs upon the cross, is the open book of the revelation of God. Man of old despised His messages, but He said, "They will reverence My Son." The word of God lies before thee, read and understand. The gospel narrative tells thee all; explains the why, the wherefore. And all this for thee.

Sigh Over a Novel.

Men and women can sigh over a novel, they can shed tears at some dramatic performance; but the passion of their Lord does not move them, scarcely interests them.

Let us stand in spirit upon Calvary. Slowly and painfully the Holy One has tolled up the hill of death. Nearly exhausted by the agonies and cruelties. He hangs bleeding and aghast. They offer him wine mingled with myrrh; He tastes, but cannot drink; a bitter taste, but no refreshment; a smarting twinge to His parched lips, but no draught to deaden pain. His last taste in life bitter! A parable this; a fund of thought and meditation. Eat and drink. O sinful, careless worldling, who never denied thyself one single thing for Christ's sake; eat and drink, and plenty of it; eat and drink and be merry; the Lord was hungry, thirsty, faint and weary, and His mouth was filled with bitterness for thee.

What is the voice of thy heart? Speak it out; "what is that to me? see thou to that."

This was the voice of the chief priests and elders. This is the voice of the careless unrelenting world. It is the voice of sin.

Oh Jesus, the Omnipotent—Among the faithless, faithful only He; Among innumerable false, unmoved, Unshaken, unswerving, unfettered, His loyalty He kept. His love, His zeal; Nor number, nor example with Him wrought To swerve from truth, or change His constant mind.

Let us look still further into the mystery of evil. It is a fact that cannot be gainsaid, that if we would seek for the most utter and complete statement of the extreme sinfulness of sin, and the misery which it inflicts on the heart, we must search into the lives of truly spiritual men.

So St. Francis, when his possession of real modesty was put to the test by Brother Matteo, answered, "thou wishest to know why it is I whom men follow? It is because the eyes of the most High have willed it thus: He continually watches the good and the wicked, and as His most holy eyes have not found among sinners any smaller man, nor any more insinuating, and more sinful, therefore He has chosen me to accomplish the marvelous work which God has undertaken; He chose me because He could find no one more worthless, and He wished here to confound the nobility and grandness of the world."

Why is this, you may ask? Is it not abundantly clear, that the further you mount on the golden stairs of spirituality, the more you rise above the drifting smoke and the confusing mists, the more you look out upon God?

Take once more the sense of sin, which kindles the altars of the savage and arms his fury against his loved and best, that sense of sin which rolled up in a stream of sacrifice to Calvary, and streamed out in one flooded into the great sacrifice of the altar.

Why is it that in those who mount up highest on the stairs of the spiritual life this sense of guilt becomes more acute? We have had three examples of it in our time.

Listen to Mr. Kibbe, the saintly author of the Christian Year, bewailing his utter worthlessness, as if he were the vilest criminal, and the most degraded sinner. Listen to Dr. Pusey, whose holy life even surpasses what the candid biographer ventures to record of him, speaking of himself as a loathsome leper, foul and defiled with sin.

Listen to the touching inscription from the "Dias Irac" put at his own wish on the tomb of one of the most saintly deans of St. Paul's: "King of majesty tremendous, Who dost free salvation send us, Point of pity, then befriend us."

Pain and weary Thou hast sought me, On the cross of suffering bought me.

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Shall such grace be vainly brought me? A King of Majesty.

A King of Majesty.

Why is it? Can there be any other explanation than this—that the higher a man mounts on the ladder of sanctity, the more he is conscious of a "King of tremendous majesty," who sees, not as man seeth, who searches the very hearts and veins, to whom he must give account?

Revelation tells us that no man can see God and live; so experience corroborates it. The sight of God means death, the sense of God's presence means a sense of sin, and a true sense of sin argues God's presence.

"It is true, as even the ordinary man sees, in no pantheistic sense, but in a certain and real way, that this world in its beauty is the waving garment which conceals God. Look higher, look closer, mount up the stairs, and you look out on a being, who was once a man among men, and who from the consciousness of His perfect humanity, was enabled to confront His accusers with the unanswerable question, 'Which of you convinceth me of sin?'"

We have seen that it was sin which caused the greatest calamity this world has ever witnessed. Out of that calamity, by the providence of God, was wrought the greatest good to mankind. Is it not true, that if we are to understand the value of this mercy on our behalf, we must first begin with being convinced of the hatefulness and danger of sin. When we realize this, we shall have learned, and learned with thankfulness that the death and sufferings of Jesus Christ springs out of, and is in proportion to, our sense of our own guilt and weakness. For, if we are guilty we need pardon; if we are weak, we need help, and both Christ has purchased for us. On the other hand, if we are not guilty, we want no pardon; if we are not weak, we need no help; why then should we feel grateful to Christ for bringing us gifts which we have no need of? In a word, the guilt of man, and the weakness of man, which spring like two crooked and blighted stems, with all their poisonous fruitage, from one and the same evil root, the corruption of his nature, that guilt, and that weakness are the first elementary truths which meet us at the very threshold of Christianity; and unless you feel these truths, and are as much convinced of them, as you are of your own existence, you can make no possible advances in religion, but will eventually bring about your own spiritual ruin, by a complete failure of the struggle with evil, for sin will have destroyed that better nature which Christ by His passion and death came to redeem.

This then is the right preparation for Passion week, to think seriously of our sins, which were the cause of Christ's sufferings, to sorrow over them, and to repent of them; and therefore Lent is appointed by the church to be a season of humiliation and mortification and penance, that by passing through the straight gate we may be prepared to receive the pardon of the sins, of which we have repented, declared to us from the cross of Christ.

Have you, each one of you, such a sense of sinfulness, the wilfulness of sin, as covers you with shame, fills you with godly sorrow, and leads you to seek pardon and comfort where alone it can be found, at the foot of the cross? Then shall ye be meet to hear the prayer which Jesus from that cross offers up for you to His Father, that He will forgive you.

Have you such a thorough conviction of your own weakness, are you so fully aware that there is a law in your members warring against the law of God, and tempting you to what you know to be wrong, as leads you to pray heartily to God, that He will send His Holy Spirit to dwell with you, and help you to all holiness of living?

If you have, happy are you; for then you are in the road to heaven. But if you have not a sense of your sinfulness and your weakness, if you are without Christian fear, and without Christian thankfulness; if you neither think of Christ as a Saviour, nor pray for the Holy Ghost as a comforter, then are you living in a Christian country, strangers to the very elements of Christianity; and it will be better in the day of judgment for Jews and heathens, who have never heard these truths, than for you who have heard them, but have heeded them not.

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LACE Curtain Sale.

GEO. R. TAYLOR CO.

Piano Bargains.

We offer as bargains this week one Krell Piano, walnut case, in fine condition, one McEwen Piano, ebonyized case, in good condition. Call and see them and you will admit that they are bargains at the price at which we offer them.

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OPENING Wednesday, Swabacker's.

Notice.

I. P. Klein, of this city, is not an agent of the Phoenix Mutual Life Insurance Company in any sense whatever. R. A. CLARK, Manager, 331 Fourth Avenue, PITTSBURGH, PA.

OPENING Wednesday, Swabacker's.

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Piano Moving.

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FAMILY WASHING. Rough Dry Washed, Starched and Dried 5 cents per pound. Flat Work, Washed and Ironed, 5 cents per pound. All hand work finished 10 cents per pound. At LUTZ BROS.' Home Steam Laundry.

OPENING Wednesday, Swabacker's.

STOGIE BOOMING.

The March Output Shows an Increase of Thirty-five Per Cent.

OVER SIX MILLION PRODUCED

By the Wheeling Manufacturers During the Month Just Closed—The Increase Over the Same Month in 1899 Was 1,580,000 Stogies—Interesting Statistics Pertaining to Wheeling's Distinctive Industry.

That the Wheeling Stogie's boom is neither short-lived nor of mean proportions is an assertion that receives added confirmation each month, when the figures of output are obtainable. January showed an increase of forty-one per cent over the same month of 1899; February chronicled its increase of thirty-two per cent, and now comes March, showing an output of 6,080,000 stogies, as compared with 4,500,000 for the same month in 1899, an increase of 1,580,000, or thirty-five per cent. The following tabulation shows the output for the first three months of 1898, 1899 and 1900, respectively. It will be noted that the first quarter of 1900 shows handsome increases over the same periods of 1898 and 1899:

1898.	
January	4,215,700
February	4,251,700
March	4,233,500
Total	12,700,900

1899.	
January	4,545,700
February	5,212,900
March	4,760,000
Total	14,518,600

1900.	
January	6,129,400
February	5,218,000
March	6,080,000
Total	17,427,400

From the report of the Wheeling internal revenue office for the month of March, it will be noted that business has been booming in all lines. Beer shows a slight increase, and cigars (stogies) and tobacco very large increases, as follows:

	1900.	1899.	Inc.	Dec.
Beer	\$9,727	\$8,941	\$ 786	—
Cigars	23,884	16,167	8,997	—
Tobacco	99,297	44,148	55,149	—
Snuff	75	123	—	\$ 47
Dec. Stamps	3,373	2,943	—	573
Prop. Stamps	19	123	—	27
Totals	\$83,479	\$75,495	\$7,975	—

DEMOCRACY DIVIDED

In Old Rock-ribbed Randolph County—Towns of Elkins and Beverly Still Scrapping—An Interesting Letter.

Special Dispatch to the Intelligencer. ELKINS, W. Va., April 1.—Democracy "Old Randolph" is having its troubles in the ranks of the "unwashed" just now, and they are of no mild character. The campaign opened last January, in the Democratic quarters, when R. B. Harris, of Beverly, announced his desire to carry off the nomination for sheriff. This stirred the Elkins (the town) side of the party into activity, and after a great number of possible and impossible candidates were discussed, it was finally decided that P. W. Marshall, a wealthy young farmer of Mingo, as principal, and County Surveyor Charles M. Marsteller, of Elkins, as deputy, would knock out the Harris boomlet and secure the nomination to friends of Elkins, and the announcement of their candidacy was made.

Harris then secured deputies in four of the nine districts, who can put up a good sum of money each, as a campaign fund, and made his formal announcement. The scheme of the Beverly side was to hold a primary election, and on account of the distribution of deputies, with the free use of the usual arguments in such cases, it was supposed that the nomination could be easily carried off. The Elkins side favored a convention and relied upon manipulation of delegates for success.

But for some reason early in the week it seemed to dawn on the Harris managers that with the distribution of deputies so liberally made, they should be able to do a little in the way of manipulation themselves, and the same conditions seemed to appear to the Marshall supporters about the same time. The result was a summons to both factions. The Elkins contingent, though, have a majority of the committee and at the meeting on Wednesday used its power to secure a primary election, which was fixed for July 21.

The Harris people are angry, and the Marshall element correspondingly happy. Harris' work has been done too early and Marshall has plenty of time to offset the effect of the distribution of deputies.

But the trouble does not stop there. M. H. King and James Coberly, of Elkins, and Clare Harding, of Beverly, are the avowed candidates for the nomination for prosecuting attorney. Coberly and King were resting easy, expecting a convention, while Harding was enthusiastic for a primary election. Neither of the Elkins candidates for prosecuting attorney were consulted as to what they wished and did not know of the plot of their friends to the primary election side. Both are now mad

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in school? Then you have often heard them complain of headache; have frequently noticed how they go about in a listless, indifferent way, haven't you?

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Laughlin's Infant Cordial

Softens the Gums, Allays the Pain, Reduces Inflammation, Controls the Bowels, Curing Summer Complaint, Dysentery, Diarrhea, Flatulence, Wind Colic, &c., &c.

Mothers will find it very valuable. The child will be relieved, gain a gentle sleep, and wake up cheerful, happy, and feeling comfortable. We guarantee each bottle, and will refund the price of every bottle not doing as we represent.

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and claim that they were betrayed by their friends in the interest of the candidate for sheriff. Coberly threatens to withdraw from the fight and oppose the nomination of Marshall, and it may complicate things very much for the Elkins faction if he should carry out the threat.

The Republican county executive committee met yesterday and decided to hold a county convention, the date to be fixed hereafter.

George B. Scott, editor of the Inter-Mountain, has been forced to retire from the paper on account of lung affection. He is succeeded by H. O. Blaker, of Davis, the founder of the Davis News. Mr. Scott will leave shortly for Southern California, with the hope of benefiting his health.

Omar Conrad, J. W. Golden and Patrick Crikard, members of the county court of this county, have brought suit against James Hanley, a wealthy hardware merchant of this city, for \$10,000, the damages they claim to have sustained on account of slanderous utterances by Hanley. Hanley and others had offered to donate a \$3,000 lot in the business portion of the town for a site for the new court house. P. H. Wees, who owns Wees' Addition, a suburb, at one time offered a larger plot of ground free, but at the last moment he withdrew his offer, and proposed to sell it to the county for \$2,000. The court bought the lot at the price. A good deal of indignation was expressed generally, and Hanley is said to have implied that Wees gave the ground free and the members of the court divided the price among themselves. The suit has revived all the feeling which formerly existed over the matter, and other suits of a similar character may result.

H. G. Frum, the veteran, who shot and seriously wounded his wife near Gilman, and then turned the revolver on himself and inflicted mortal wounds, last Tuesday evening, is dead. This was his third wife. She was much younger than he and he was jealous of her and a neighboring farmer. He was generally respected and was a prominent member of the G. A. R. He came here about two years ago from Ritchie county.

THE RIVER.

YESTERDAY'S DEPARTURES.

Pittsburgh...KEYSTONE STATE, 1 p. m.
Staten Island...LEROY, 7 a. m.
Cincinnati...VIRGINIA, 9 a. m.
Pittsburgh...BEN HUR, 4 a. m.
Pittsburgh...KANAWHA, 10 a. m.
Zanesville...LORENA, 5 a. m.

BOATS LEAVING TO-DAY.

Parkersburg...BEN HUR, 9 p. m.
Staten Island...LUTH, 5:30 p. m.
Charleston...LEROY, 2:30 p. m.
Steubenville...T. M. DAYNE, 2:30 p. m.

BOATS LEAVING TO-MORROW.

Cincinnati...KEYSTONE STATE, 8 a. m.
Matamoras...JEWELL, 11 a. m.
Pittsburgh...QUEEN CITY, 5 a. m.
Parkersburg...H. K. BEDFORD, 10:30 a. m.
Staten Island...RUTH, 3:30 p. m.
Charleston...LEROY, 3:30 p. m.
Steubenville...T. M. DAYNE, 2:30 p. m.

Along the Landing.

The marks at 6 p. m. Sunday showed 10 feet 4 inches and rising. Weather